

REMARKS

Claims 1, 9, 11-13, 15, 18, 20, 21, and 26-28 have been amended. Claim 5, 7 and 8 have been canceled. Thus, claims 1 – 4, 6, and 9 - 28 remain pending in this application. No new matter has been added. Applicants thank the Examiner for allowing claim 4.

Claims 1, 5, 9, 11-13, 15, 18, 20, 21, and 26-28 stand objected to because of certain informalities. In view of the amendments made to these claims, withdrawal of this objection is requested.

Claims 14 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, ¶2, for being indefinite. In view of the amendment made to claim 14 withdrawal of this rejection is requested.

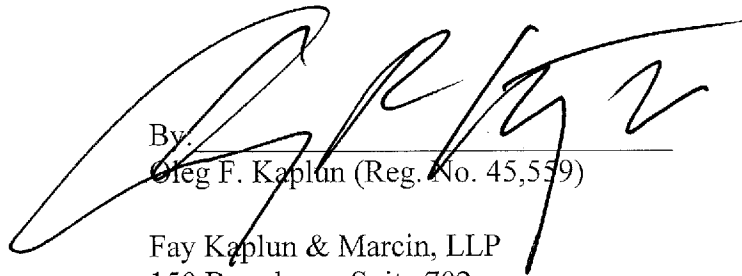
Claim 1, 5, 9-15, and 18-27 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,594,971 to Addy. Claims 2, 3, 6, 16, 17, and 28 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Addy.

Applicants have amended the independent claims to recite that the hydration port includes an adapter for connection with a source of the flushing fluid. Support for this amendment is found at least in paragraph [0020]. The Examiner asserts that opening 78 in Addy meets the recited hydration port, but Applicants submit that this assertion is untenable because opening 78 is an opening formed by a loose flap, as seen in Figure 6. There is nothing illustrated in this Figure, or described in the specification, that would lead one of ordinary skill in the art to regard opening 78 as including an adapter for connection with a source of flushing fluid. Accordingly, the claims are not anticipated nor rendered obvious by Addy.

Applicants submit that all of the presently pending claims are in condition for allowance.
An early and favorable action on the merits is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: June 15, 2010

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, likely belonging to Oleg F. Kaplun, is written over the printed name and firm information.

By: _____
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